

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1 and 8 have been amended. Claims 7, 9 and 15-33 have been cancelled. Claims 1-6, 8 and 10-14 are pending and under consideration.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 29 was objected to for an informality. Claim 29 has been cancelled.

The Examiner further noted that claims 15, 23 and 27-29 were substantial duplicates of claims 1 and 7-10, respectively. Claims 15, 23 and 27-29 have been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the foregoing objections is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-4, 8, 10, 11, 14-21, 24-27, 29, 30, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Howarth (US 6,549,490) (hereinafter "Howarth").

Claims 1, 6 and 15 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Shimizu et al. (JP 2001-210003) (hereinafter "Shimizu").

Claims 5, 6, 12, 13, 22 and 31 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howarth in view of Shimizu.

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claims 7 and 9, respectively, and are therefore believed to be in a condition for allowance.

Claims 1-6 and 10-14 depend on claims 1 and 8, respectively, and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

Claims 15-22, 24-27 and 29-33 have been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that claims 7, 9, 23 and 28 have been found to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 7, 9, 23 and 28 have been cancelled.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date:

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